

Provincial measles immunization campaign for school age children-- April to June 2019

Thank you for participating in the recent measles outbreak response by offering MMR vaccine to your clients. Measles is no longer circulating locally, but outbreaks around the world increase the risk of cases being imported to BC. To protect our communities, the province has launched a measles vaccine catch-up campaign for school age children.

Although, the majority of children in VCH have had two doses of MMR vaccine, we are missing vaccination records for approximately 11% of children. Parents of these children have been sent letters asking them to provide Public Health with their immunization records, or to take the opportunity to immunize their child. We are offering additional clinics through Public Health, but families may choose to be immunized by pharmacists or their family physician.

Measles vaccine recommendations remain unchanged:

- All children should receive MMR at 12 months of age and at kindergarten entry (4-6 years).
- All adults born in 1970 or later, and health care workers born in 1957 or later, should have two documented doses of MMR vaccine.
- Adults born before 1970, and health care workers born before 1957, are considered immune to measles.

Many adults have an uncertain history of immunization or disease; please offer a single dose of vaccine if you think it is likely they are not immune from either infection or vaccination. **Please prioritize immunization for those adults who are travelling to places where measles is circulating.**

We are collecting immunization records of school age children. If you administer MMR vaccine to eligible children, please fax a copy of the immunization record for all clients ≤ 19 years of age back to your local community health centre. The provincially-approved consent and documentation form can be found on our website: <http://www.vch.ca/Documents/Reporting-Form-VCH-Pharmacists.pdf>

Ordering vaccine: MMR vaccine is available through your local community health centre. Please place your orders based on expected demand over a two-week period. Requests for all vaccines are now to be submitted using a Biological Request Form with your office's assigned ID #. If you do not have an electronic or paper copy of this form, please contact VCH-CDC by emailing Wendy.Dipalma@vch.ca or calling (604) 675-3900.

If you prefer to communicate by fax or phone, that option will remain available. Please save a copy of your unique paper-based Biological Products Request Form as it will be required to submit future vaccine requests.

Influenza activity is declining; please return unused vaccine to your community health centre.

The 2018-2019 influenza season was unusual, with two separate peaks of influenza activity. Influenza A/H1N1 circulated early in the influenza season, followed by late season illness from A/H3N2. Influenza activity is finally on the decline, and the influenza vaccination campaign for this season is over. Thank you for your efforts to immunize our VCH residents against influenza this year. Please return any unused influenza vaccine over the next few weeks.

Thank you for continuing to recommend and administer immunizations to your clients. Your support is truly appreciated.